



National Weather Service Chicago Forecast Office 2016

Spotter Reference Sheet

What to Report

- **Injuries/Fatalities**
- **Damage:**
 - ✓ Trees down (snapped or uprooted? Diameter?)
 - ✓ Branches broken (diameter?)
 - ✓ Power poles down
 - ✓ Structural damage
- **Tornado** (rotation? debris?)
- **Funnel cloud** (rotation?)
- **Wall cloud** (rotation?)
- **Hail** (all sizes)
- **Wind gusts** (40 mph or greater)
- **Heavy rain** (1" or more)
- Creeks out of banks
- Water > 6" deep with current on road
- Water > 2' deep standing on roads
- Unusual road and/or bridge closures
- Buildings filled with water
- Mud or rock slides or debris flow
- Ice jam, levee failure, dam break

How to Report

Include:

- **Who** you are
- **Where** you are
- **Where** the weather occurred
- **When** it occurred
- **What** was observed

Report through your local spotter network.
If the network is not active:

Contact NWS direct via:

Phone: ***Provided in training class***

Web: **www.weather.gov/lot**
("Submit Storm Report")

Ham Radio: WX9LOT

Share pictures via:

Facebook: NWSChicago

Twitter: @NWSChicago

Hail Size

Pea = ¼ inch
Mothball = ½ inch
Penny size = ¾ inch
Nickel size = 0.88 inch
Quarter size = 1 inch *****severe*****
Half Dollar = 1 ¼ inch
Walnut = 1 ½ inch

Golf ball = 1 ¾ inch
Egg = 2 inches
Billiard ball = 2 ¼ inch
Tennis ball = 2 ½ inch
Baseball = 2 ¾ inch
Softball = 4 ½ inch

Estimating Wind Speed

40 to 55 mph (non-severe)	Trees swaying, twigs and small limbs break, loose, lightweight objects (trash cans, lawn chairs) blown around.
60 to 80 mph	Medium to large tree limbs downed, sheds, barns and weak structures damaged, truck pushed off the highway.
80 to 100 mph	Numerous large tree limbs downed, shallow rooted trees pushed over, buildings partially uprooted, farm buildings, weak structures severely damaged.

Flash Flood

- Person or vehicle swept away by flowing water, or rescued from deep standing water
- A maintained county or state road closed by high water
- A stream that flows out of its banks and poses a threat
- 6 inches or more of flowing water over a road or 3 feet of standing water
- Rainfall of an inch or more in an hour or less in an urban area or 2 inches in rural areas

Helpful Internet Links

NWS Chicago	www.weather.gov/lot
Weather Spotter's Field Guide	www.nws.noaa.gov/om/brochures/SGJune6-11.pdf
Online Spotter Training Course	www.meted.ucar.edu/training_course.php?id=23
Weather Tutorial	www.srh.noaa.gov/jetstream